

RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting held on 21st February 2007 at the Parish Office

Present: Councillors: D. Whiteing (Chairman)
 J. Brooks (Vice Chairman)
 S. Berlyn
 D. Hawkins
 D. Powell
 M. Wood

In attendance: Clerk to Parish Council

Public Question Time

No Members of the Public were present

124 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr J Thomson.

125 Declarations of Interest

Cllr D Powell declared a personal interest in Minute 141 by virtue of being the next door neighbour of the Assistant Clerk Facilities.

126 Minutes of the Meeting held on 24th January, 2007

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 24th January, 2007 be approved and signed as a correct record. There were no matters arising. Assistant Clerk Planning and IT be formally thanked for covering this meeting for the Clerk.

127 Financial Information for February, 2007

127.1 Approval of payments from after the last meeting until 21st February, 2007

Details of payments to 21st February 2007 were circulated (see Appendix I attached) and cheques were signed.

RESOLVED: that the payments from after the last meeting until 21st February, 2007 be approved.

127.2 Reconciliation sheet to 21st February, 2007

Balances at the bank, including Petty Cash, were checked by Cllr Powell and all balances matched (see Appendix II attached). An updated sheet was circulated up until 21st February. This item and item regarding end of year prediction were taken together.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

127. 3 End of Year Prediction and budgets to 21st February, 2007

The Clerk advised that with potential income there could be a possibility of 10,723.92 additional monies left over and above earmarked reserves of £57,490.74 and £25,000 reserve figure. (Shown as Appendix V)

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

The Chairman of Resources was concerned as to how to compare the last two years sets of accounts as Parish Council had a new accounting packaging and it was difficult to show a comparison for the Danbury Times.

The Chairman put forward the following proposal which was seconded by Vice Chairman of the Council and agreed by Members.

RESOLVED: that the Chairman of the Council explain in the Danbury Times that a new accounting package was being used to meet current legislation and that the figures would be compiled from the Annual Return.

127.3 Receipts until 31st January 2007

A list of receipts to 31st January 2007 were circulated (see Appendix III attached).

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

127.4 Debtors more than 3 months

There were currently none to report.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

127.5 Earmarked Reserves

The list of earmarked funds and movements in and out of the funds to end January, 2007 was circulated (see Appendix IV attached). A question was raised regarding movements of funds from earmarked reserves the Clerk explained how marks were placed against the items on the payment sheet. She would also check that the computer was showing these entries marked in the correct manner.

RESOLVED: that a) the clerk check that entries were marked in the correct manner
b) that the information be noted.

127.6 Public liability for Bus Shelter Cleaning

No written response had been received from the contractor responsible for cleaning the bus shelters regarding Public Liability insurance. The item was on the next Environment Committee to investigate different companies.

RESOLVED: that the information be noted.

128 Information Technology

The Clerk gave a verbal update on the situation regarding spam. It was explained that only correctly addresses email will be delivered. Incorrectly addressed email will be rejected and returned to sender. This was one of the changes made to reduce the inbound spam. A catch-ball account could be set up to redirect all unknowns to the main inbox. Members agreed this course of action.

A spam filter had now been switched on Parish Council computers. The support company are still continuing to monitor when the system crashes and what causes this. It has been identified that this has occurred when contacting one of the councillors. The next stage was to identify what causes the error. A mailbox has been set up to capture all email to this councillor in the hope of trapping the next culprit as it goes through the system.

RESOLVED: that a) the Clerk requests the Support Company to make a catch-ball account

b) that the continued investigation be noted.

129 Requests for Additional Funding from Committees

The Clerk requested the purchase of a cross-cut shredder. She had sought the best possible price which was £156.00 from Clarkes.

RESOLVED: a cross cut shredder be purchased for the sum of £156.00 excluding VAT.

130 Credit Card Facility

Barclays Bank the Parish Council bank can offer a credit card for the cost of £32.00 as an Annual Charge.

The only way this would be permitted is via the payments being made by direct debit (direct debits are permitted under the Council's Financial regulations) with the initial mandate being signed by two authorised signatories. These payments are then reported to the Council/Committees. There must be restricted use of the card to the Clerk. Also restricted use as to when to use the card - only for purchases over the telephone, internet etc or in retail premises who do not accept an official order number.

A procedure for the card must be set as follows:

- a) The card must be kept in the Petty Cash Tin unless the clerk is expecting to make a purchase.
- b) Payment of any expenditure on the card during the month would be paid in full by direct debit from the current account. The expenditure would be on the next cheque list as normal.
- c) The card should only be used in circumstances where there are significant benefits and the supplier will not accept an official order and submit an invoice subsequently. Ordering goods through the normal system should be processed through the ordering procedure in the normal way. All receipts for goods (which should be VAT receipts must be returned as soon as possible after making the purchase.
- d) Council should set a maximum limit for the credit card to £500.00

Members agreed that the Business Manager should come and speak to Parish Council regarding this item.

RESOLVED: that a) the Business Manager comes to speak to the Council on this item

b) the Clerk ascertains from other Banks fees for credit cards.

131 Payment of Water Bills

RESOLVED: that the Essex and Suffolk Water Bills be placed on direct debit and that the appropriate forms be complete by two signatories of the Parish Council.

132 Insurance

The Terrorism Insurance had a revised Annual Premium of £173.26.

RESOLVED: that Members noted the increase.

133 Three Year Forecast

The Clerk circulated a report stating the projects that had been agreed to be considered for Dawson Memorial Field. When the Public Works Loans were to be paid and items that had been planned for next twelve months. Cllr Powell had forwarded the Clerk a spreadsheet which he thought should be used quarterly. The Clerk advised that she felt that this was added work which should only be compiled with the budget each year. Members felt that this item should be discussed after the new Council is appointed in

June and that Cllr Powell bring the spreadsheet and explain it to the meeting at this time.

RESOLVED: that this item be investigated further in June after the appointment of a new Council.

134 Pension Fund

Correspondence had been received from the Essex County Council stating that the Parish Council as an Employer requires a Flexible Retirement Policy. The Clerk had investigated with the Essex County Council and they had a draft policy. The Clerk would investigate further with the EALC to see if there was a policy for Parish Councils.

RESOLVED: that the Clerk investigates further with the EALC.

135 Resources Meeting 21st March, 2007

The Clerk was unable to attend the meeting on the 21st March, 2007 and requested a change of date to Tuesday 20th March, 2007.

RESOLVED: that the next Resources Committee be held on Tuesday 20th March, 2007

136 Courses at EALC

The Clerk had requested to attend the following two courses at Foakes Hall at Dunmow:

- a) The Funding Game on 1st March, 2007 for the sum of £30.00
- b) Employment Issues Course for the sum of £50.00

RESOLVED: that the Clerk attends the above two courses for the total sum of £80.00

137 Matters for Report

No matters were raised.

138 Dates of meetings in 2007

The dates of future meetings were noted as shown below. The Chairman asked members to note that the April meeting was scheduled for a Monday.

Tuesday 20th March, Monday 23rd April

30th May, 27th June, 18th July, 18th September

24th October, 21st November, Tuesday 18th December

139 Exclusion of Press and Public

RESOLVED: that pursuant to S.1 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 the meeting be not now open to the public and press for the following items of business and they were instructed to withdraw.

140 Staffing Report

Members considered the request from Assistant Clerk Facilities. A lengthy debate took place. The following was the Resolution made by Members.

RESOLVED: Whilst Parish Council value Assistant Clerk Facilities work and standards achieved it is regrettable that due to the strategic requirement of the Council, we cannot agree to your request.

141 Pay Awards

The following pay awards were RESOLVED to be paid:-

Assistant Clerk Planning and IT to move to scale point 19 from 1st April, 2007 pro rata for 17 hours.

Assistant Clerk Facilities to move to scale point 19 from 1st September, 2007 pro rata for 18 hours.

Clerk to move to scale point 31 from 1st May 2007 pro rata for 28 hours.

Groundsman to move to scale point 26 which is the bottom of Scale 2 which is full time post of 37 hours.

As yet the new rates have not been supplied by the EALC Members agreed that up to a 3% pay rise would be permitted and monies would be backdated when received.

142 Lone Working Policy

Members deferred this item to the next meeting.

Business having been concluded, the Chairman closed the meeting at 10.07pm.

D. Whiteing
Chairman

Signed.....

Date.....